

# Maryland Historical Trust

## Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties Form

Inventory No. S-505

### 1. Name of Property (indicate preferred name)

historic Ralph Riggin & Brother

other \_\_\_\_\_

### 2. Location

street and number Hearn Alley \_\_\_\_\_ not for publication

city, town Crisfield \_\_\_\_\_ vicinity

county Somerset

### 3. Owner of Property (give names and mailing addresses of all owners)

name Kocojo, Inc.

street and number P. O. Box 670 telephone \_\_\_\_\_

city, town Crisfield state Maryland zip code 21817

### 4. Location of Legal Description

~~courthouse, registry of deeds, etc.~~ Somerset County Clerk of Court liber 458 folio 695

city, town Princess Anne tax map 102 tax parcel 18 tax ID number 7-1115989

### 5. Primary Location of Additional Data

- ☐ Contributing Resource in National Register District  
☐ Contributing Resource in Local Historic District  
☐ Determined Eligible for the National Register/Maryland Register  
☐ Determined Ineligible for the National Register/Maryland Register  
☐ Recorded by HABS/HAER  
☐ Historic Structure Report or Research Report at MHT  
☐ Other: \_\_\_\_\_

### 6. Classification

Category	Ownership	Current Function	Resource Count
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	Contributing
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce/trade	<u>1</u>
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> defense	Noncontributing
<input type="checkbox"/> site		<input type="checkbox"/> domestic	<input type="checkbox"/> buildings
<input type="checkbox"/> object		<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> sites
		<input type="checkbox"/> funerary	<input type="checkbox"/> structures
		<input type="checkbox"/> government	<input type="checkbox"/> objects
		<input type="checkbox"/> health care	<input type="checkbox"/> Total
		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> industry	
		<input type="checkbox"/> landscape	
		<input type="checkbox"/> recreation/culture	
		<input type="checkbox"/> religion	
		<input type="checkbox"/> social	
		<input type="checkbox"/> transportation	
		<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	
		<input type="checkbox"/> unknown	
		<input type="checkbox"/> vacant/not in use	
		<input type="checkbox"/> other:	

Number of Contributing Resources previously listed in the Inventory \_\_\_\_\_

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## 7. Description

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### Condition

<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> altered

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Prepare both a one paragraph summary and a comprehensive description of the resource and its various elements as it exists today.

The Ralph Riggin & Brother packinghouse is a two-story, two-bay brick structure that stands on Dock Street on the Annessex River in the City of Crisfield, Somerset County, Maryland. The packinghouse faces southwest, and the property extends back to 11<sup>th</sup> Street, also known Hearn's Alley. The building is sandwiched between the C. W. Howeth & Brother building to the south and the former Crockett & Riggin building to the north.

Built around 1915, the two-story, seven-course common bond brick packinghouse is largely covered with a coat of stucco, but the brickwork on the left (north) corner of the main façade remains exposed. The first floor is pierced by an uneven series of boarded up door and window openings. The second story is pierced by two rectangular window openings with altered sash. The top of the wall projects with a row of corbelled brickwork covered with stucco.

The northwest and southeast sides of the building are completely covered by adjacent structures that share partly walls. The two-story front section has a low sloping shed roof and is a single room in depth. Attached to the back (northeast) side of the main block is a single-story shed roofed section covered with a low pitched tar roof. Attached to the back of the shed roofed section is a single-story concrete block addition that dates to the third quarter of the twentieth century. The plain concrete walled addition is covered by a medium pitched gable roof sheathed with asphalt shingles.

The interior was not open for inspection.

## 8. Significance

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Period	Areas of Significance	Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> health/medicine	<input type="checkbox"/> performing arts	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> invention	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-1999	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment/ recreation	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion	
<input type="checkbox"/> 2000-	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> ethnic heritage	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science	
	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/ settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> social history	
	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning		<input type="checkbox"/> maritime history	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation	
	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation		<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> other:	

Specific dates

Architect/Builder

Construction dates

Evaluation for:

☐ National Register

☐ Maryland Register

☒ not evaluated

Prepare a one-paragraph summary statement of significance addressing applicable criteria, followed by a narrative discussion of the history of the resource and its context. (For compliance projects, complete evaluation on a DOE Form – see manual.)

The Ralph Riffin & Brother packinghouse, erected around 1915, is part of the row of two-story brick seafood processing facilities that line Dock Street and the Annesmessex River in Crisfield. Despite its abandoned state and deteriorated condition, the two-story common bond brick building contributes to the historic nature of the Crisfield waterfront as part of the architectural fabric that housed seafood packing for much of the twentieth century.

### HISTORY AND SUPPORT

Ralph Riffin and his brother Lloyd acquired part of the Annesmessex River front property on Dock Street from Abednego R. Crockett in April 1907 for \$3,000<sup>1</sup>. However, the Riffin Brothers were operated a packing house on Jersey Island according to the early twentieth-century Sanborn maps published in 1904 and 1911.<sup>2</sup> By 1917 the brothers had relocated to their Dock Street location.<sup>3</sup> The two-story common bond brick building had cement floors, electric lights and coal stoves for heat.

The company is listed in the Cannery Directory compiled by the National Cannery Association, Washington, DC, in 1938 and was packing clams, fish and fish products, herring and shad roe, oysters, crabmeat, and green turtle. The *Directory of Maryland Manufacturers for 1965-66* lists Ralph Riffin & Brother on Dock Street in Crisfield. Rex Riffin was the manager and plant executive and Tom Riffin was in charge of sales. According to the Directory, they employed four men and packed fish and frozen soft crabs and crabmeat.<sup>4</sup> The family sold the building in 1982.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Somerset County Land Record, SFD 49/71, 4/30/1907.

<sup>2</sup> Sanborn Insurance Maps, 1904 and 1911 issues, Nabb Research Center of Delmarva History & Culture.

<sup>3</sup> Sanborn Insurance Map, 1917, Nabb Research Center of Delmarva History & Culture.

<sup>4</sup> *Directory of Maryland Manufacturers for 1965-1966*, Maryland Department of Economic Development.

<sup>5</sup> Somerset County Land Record, 332/140, 4/2/1982.

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Name Ralph Riggin & Brother Packing Company  
**Continuation Sheet**

Number 8 Page 1

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Ralph Riggin & Brother Packing Company  
Dock Street, Crisfield, Somerset County, Maryland  
Chain of title

Improvements 29 x 184

Map 102, Parcel 18

458/695

Edwin L. Heath, Sr. and Edwin L. Heath, Jr.

to

2/6/1998

Kocojo, Inc.

\$62,500 party wall with C. W. Howeth & Bros., Plat ITP 341/772

422/543

John B. Robins, IV, substitute trustee

to

8/31/1994

Edwin L. Heath, Sr. and Edwin L. Heath, Jr.

\$42,000

ITP 350/717

John Gregory Cox and Cathy Lynn Cox

to

4/13/1985

Byrd's Inc.

\$85,000

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Name Ralph Riggin & Brother Packing Company  
**Continuation Sheet**

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ITP 332/140	Jane Forbush, et al. (Thomas Riggin and Roger Riggin, Sr.) to 4/2/1982 John Gregory Cox and Cathy Lynn Cox
BLB 172/390	Elsie Riggin, widow to 6/31/1955 Ralph Riggin and Alma Riggin (except so much that was conveyed to Charles W. Howeth and Robert Howeth 4/19/1945, BLB 131/458, part of the oyster house property of the said Riggins)
SFD 49/71	Abednego R. Crockett to 4/30/1907 Ralph Riggin and Lloyd Riggin \$3,000
HFL 8/129	N. Walter Dixon, trustee to 6/14/1890 Abednego R. Crockett, L. James Riggin, and John T. Sterling, trading as "Crockett & Riggin & Co." Circuit Court of Chancery, No. 1383, 11/9/1889

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Name Ralph Riggin & Brother Packing Company  
**Continuation Sheet**

Number 8 Page 3

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HFL 4/240

Thomas Conner and others

to

5/27/1886

Abednego R. Crockett  
\$1200 bounded on the west by the Little Annemessex on the south by the  
land of William H. Roach and Thomas J. Dixon on the east by Hearn's  
Alley, and on the north by the grantees land

## 9. Major Bibliographical References

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Somerset County Land Records, various volumes, Somerset County Courthouse.  
(For a full list of the resources see footnotes)

## 10. Geographical Data

Acreage of surveyed property .125 acre  
Acreage of historical setting .40 acre  
Quadrangle name Crisfield, Maryland

Quadrangle scale: 1:24,000

### Verbal boundary description and justification

The historic metes and bounds of this property have been reduced in size from the initial acreage with a subdivision of the lot. Three property lines are coincidental with the historic boundary of the lot.

## 11. Form Prepared by

name/title	Paul B. Touart, Architectural Historian, Virginia Jenkins, Business Historian, CBMM		
organization	Private Consultants	date	12/18/2001
street & number	P. O. Box 5	telephone	410-651-1094
city or town	Westover	state	Maryland 21871

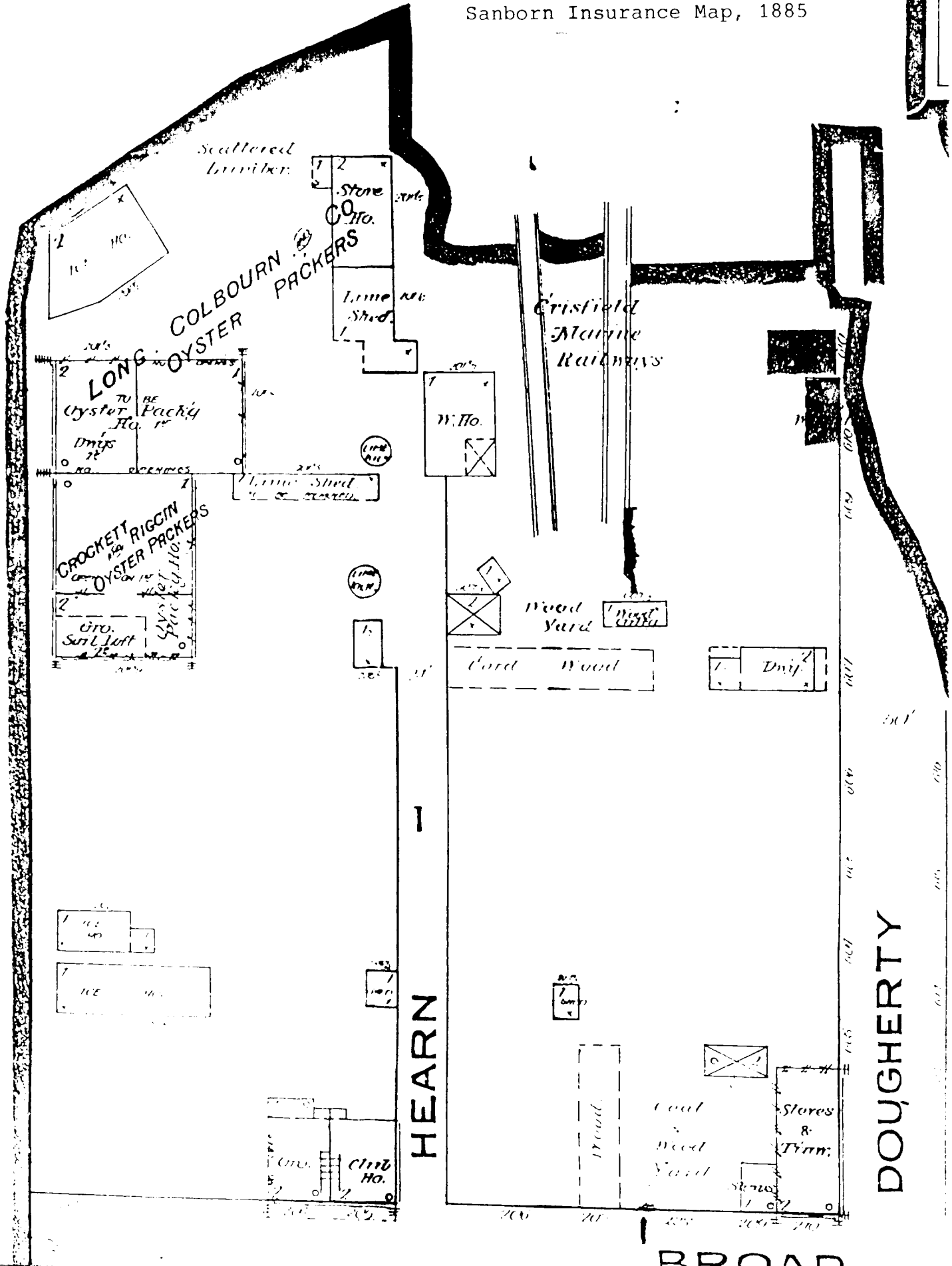
The Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties was officially created by an Act of the Maryland Legislature to be found in the Annotated Code of Maryland, Article 41, Section 181 KA, 1974 supplement.

The survey and inventory are being prepared for information and record purposes only and do not constitute any infringement of individual property rights.

return to: Maryland Historical Trust  
DHCD/DHCP  
100 Community Place  
Crownsville, MD 21032-2023  
410-514-7600

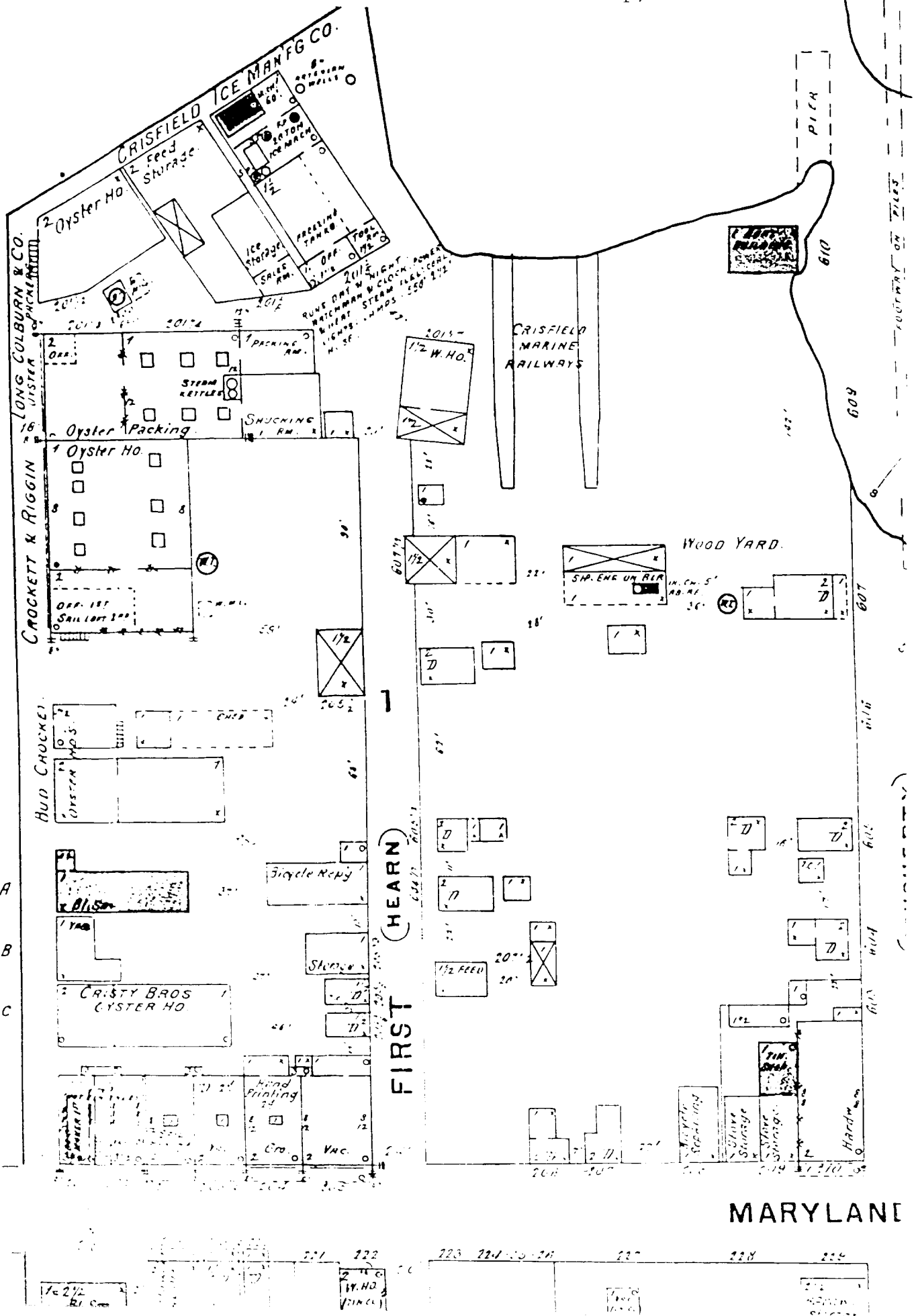
S-505, Ralph Riffin & Bro.  
Sanborn Insurance Map, 1885

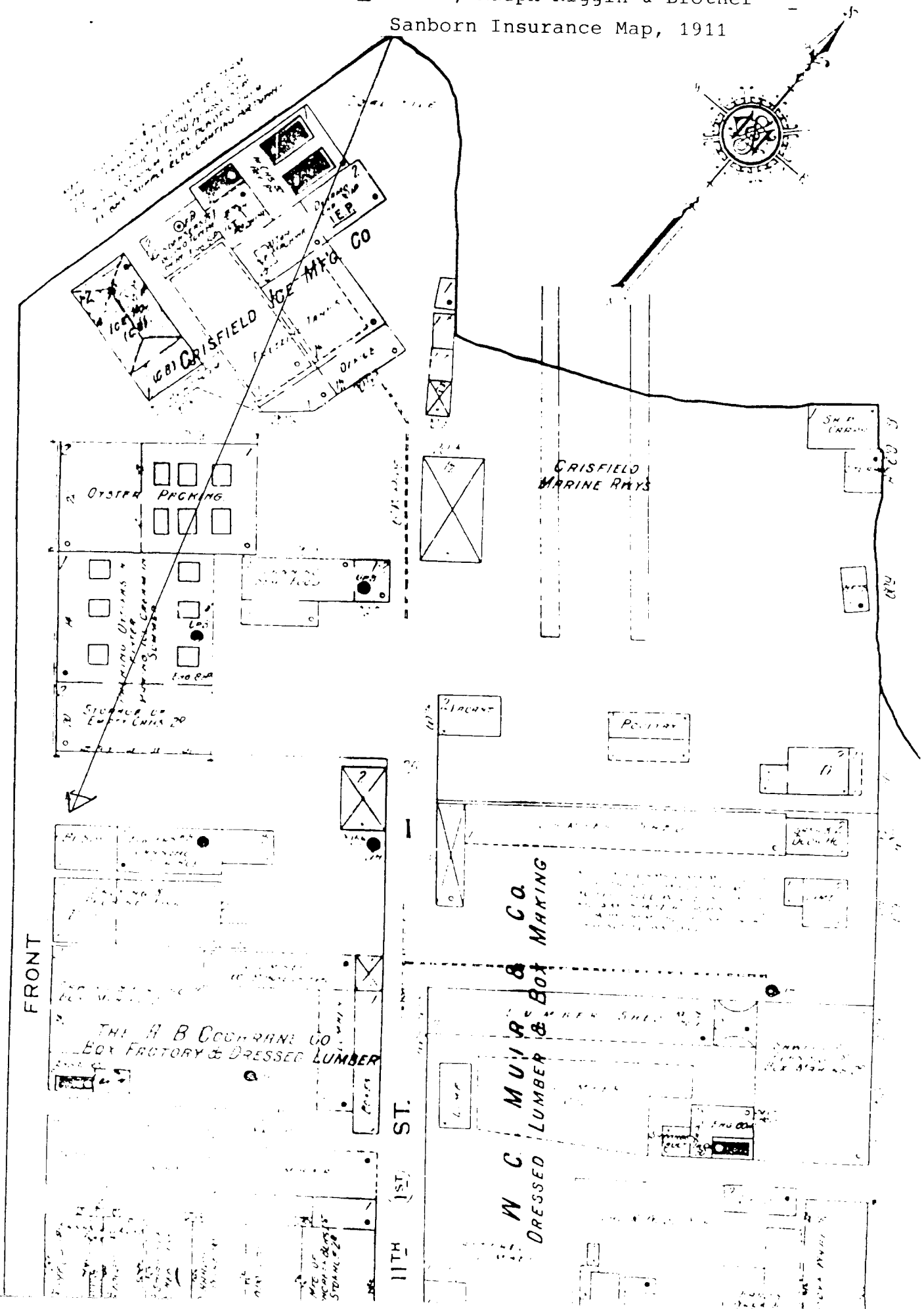
River





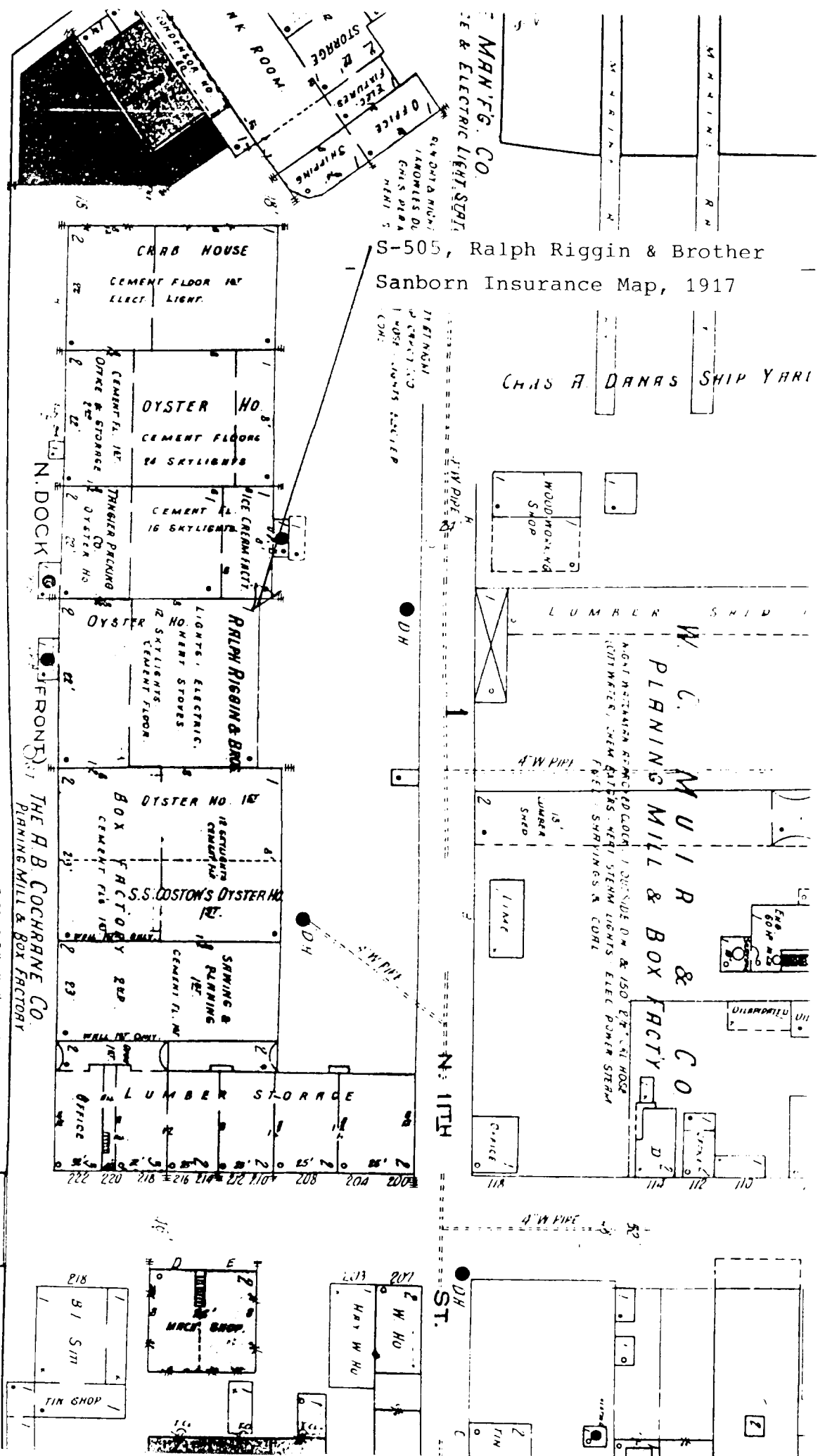
Sanbourn Insurance Map, 1897





e  
Anne

River



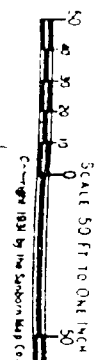
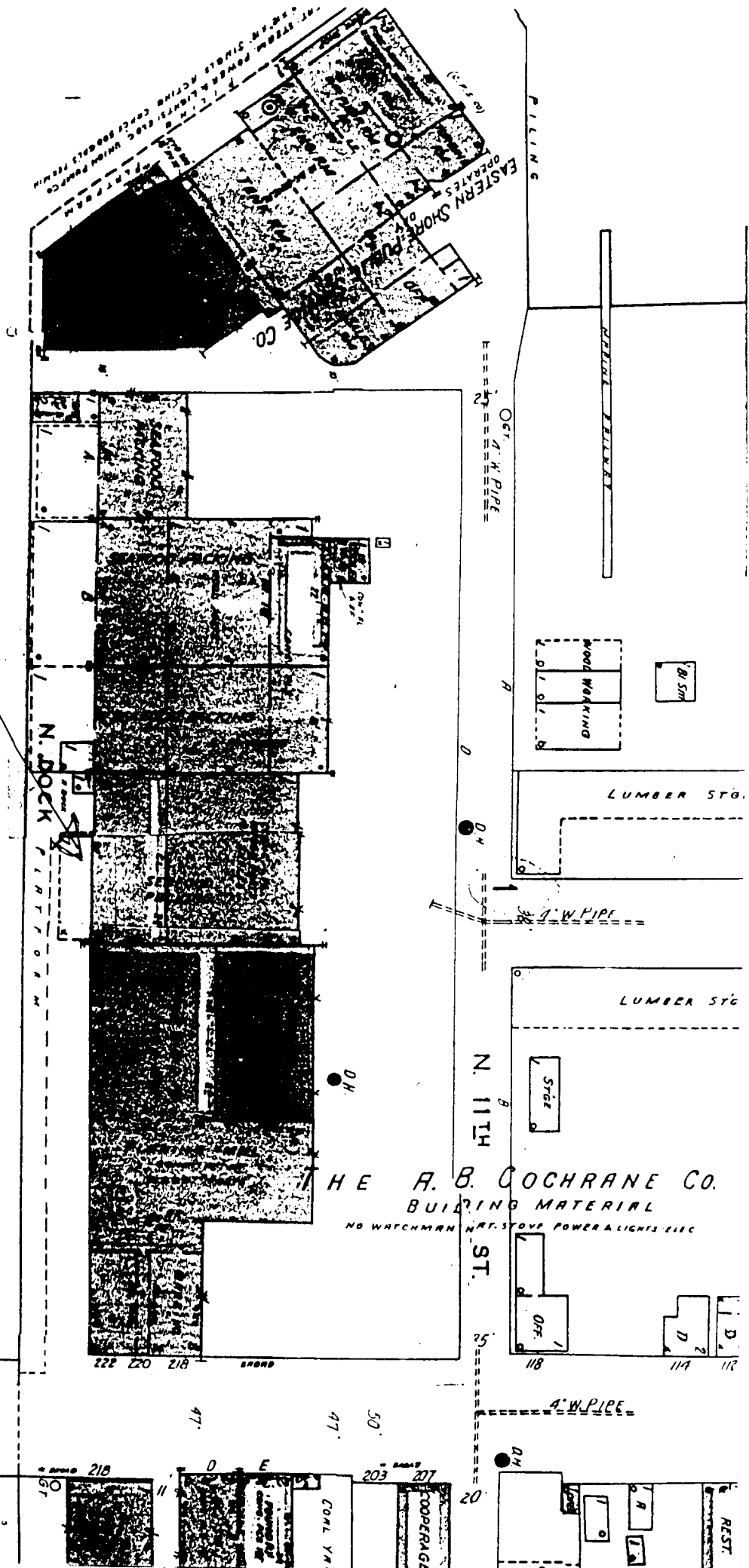
CONSUMERS PUBLIC SERVICE CO.  
OFFICES DAY & NIGHT  
S-505,  
Sanborn

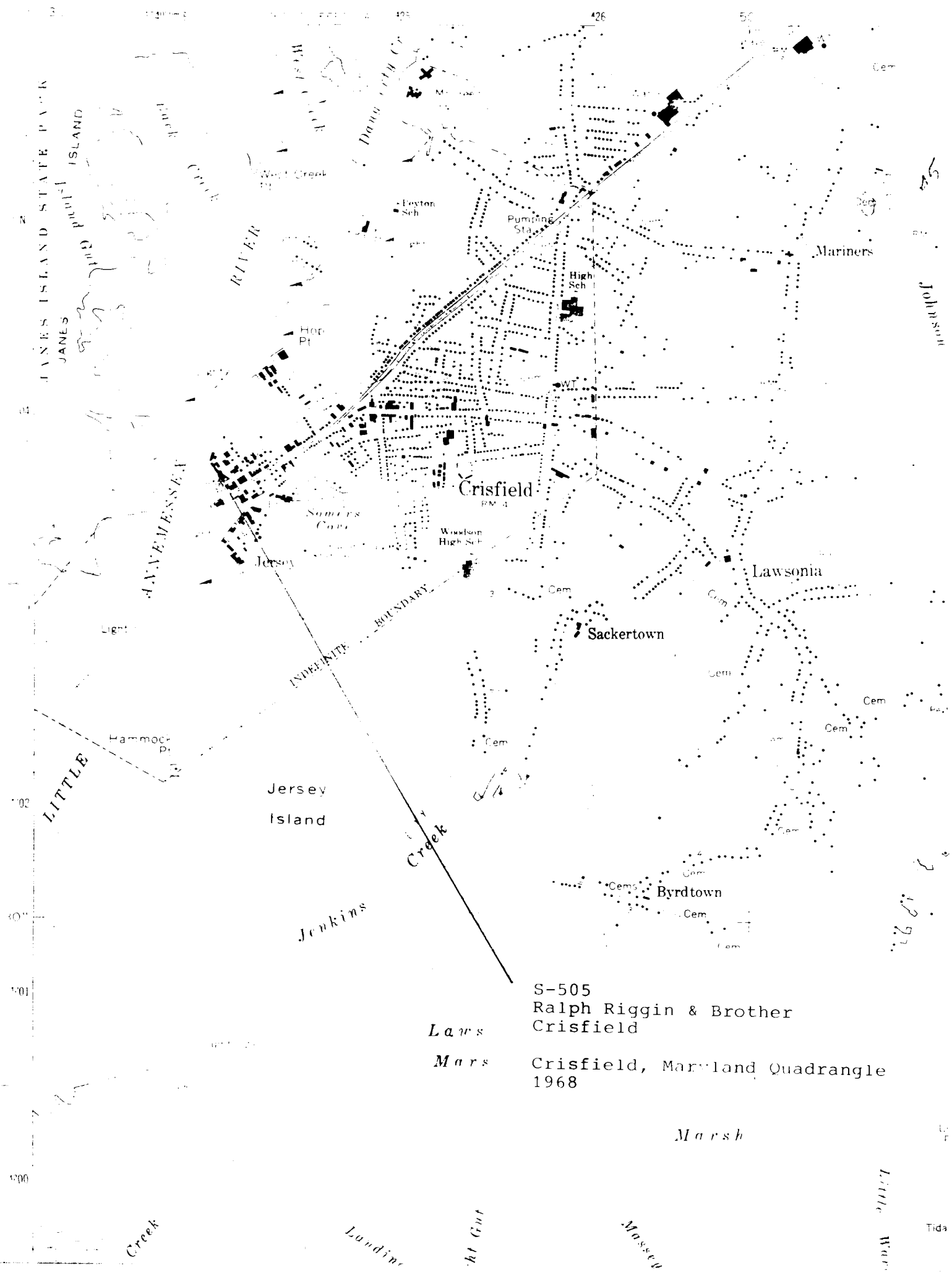
5, Ralph Riggin & Brother  
orn Insurance Map, 1923

Q

S-505, Ralph Riffin & Bro.  
 Sanborn Insurance Map, 1931

Little Annemesset River







S-505

RAMPIN RIGGIN & BRO.

CRISTINA, SOMMERSET C. MD.

SOUTHWEST AVE.

2/2002, PAUL TOWN, PHOTO.

NEG. / MD. 1st TRUST